

MINUTES
NATURAL AREAS, PARKS AND TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams
770 Vernon Avenue
November 19, 2025 at 4:00 PM

ROLL CALL

In Attendance: Councillor Chambers (Chair), Julian Anderson (via Teams), Kathryn Bridge, Hollis Hodson, David Little (via Teams), Michelle Watt (4:09 p.m.), Brian Wilkes, and Kathleen Woodruff
Regrets: Kathy Humphrey, Kim McIvor
Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager, Parks, Becky Goodall, Park Planner Designer; Adam Smith, Planning Analyst, and Nathan Cernusca, Committee Clerk

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by H. Hodson and Seconded by M. Watt: “That the Minutes of the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee meeting held September 17, 2025, be adopted as amended.”

***The minutes were amended to replace the 8th bullet point under ‘Community Feedback on Panama Flats Concept Plan’ with the following:**

- **“Present non-governmental organizations and community associations expressed the desire for on-leash required between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.”***

RESULT: Carried 8 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Chambers, Hodson, Wilkes, Woodruff, Watt, Bridge, Little, Anderson

OPPOSED: None

MOVED by H. Hodson and Seconded by B. Wilkes: “That the Minutes of the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee meeting held October 15, 2025, be adopted as circulated.”

RESULT: Carried 8 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Chambers, Hodson, Wilkes, Woodruff, Watt, Bridge, Little, Anderson

OPPOSED: None

COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

CHAIRS REMARKS

- B. Wilkes reviewed the briefing note circulated to committee members (Briefing Note on file).

MOVED by H. Hodson and Seconded by B. Wilkes: “That the agenda be amended to move the Panama Flats Zoning Discussion item to occur before the Year in Review item”.

RESULT: Carried 8 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Chambers, Hodson, Wilkes, Woodruff, Watt, Bridge, Little, Anderson

OPPOSED: None

QUADRA MCKENZIE PLAN UPDATE

The Planning Analyst gave a presentation on the Quadra McKenzie Plan Update (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Habitat sites or special site designations are identified through the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy with each sub-area containing a policy that guides site preservation. Consideration of the building footprint, height allowance and trees is to be reviewed during development applications.
- During pre-consultation discussions, property owners are encouraged to consider development that is sensitive to the environment for such concerns as cement pads and permeable surfaces.
- Strengthening environmental protections within South Quadra, including Playfair Park. Specific habitat site designations have been added to this plan to ensure developments adjacent to the park consider sensitivity such as reducing site coverage and reducing permeability.
- Avoid cookie-cutter corridor areas with consideration to six story development, environmental protection and scaled building heights and flexibility density.
- The Quadra McKenzie Plan sets the framework for land use and allows policy to be developed to guide development applications.
- Staff indicated that policies exist as part of the housing section with priorities to enable non-market housing and address affordability.

The Planner exited the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

PANAMA FLATS ZONING DISCUSSION

The Committee had a roundtable discussion regarding Panama Flats Zoning. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- The Zoning Bylaw regulates land use and does not direct activities that can be conducted on lands.
- Control of dogs (leash-optional and leash-on) is regulated through the Animals Bylaw, including exceptions.
- There is an interest in conservation zoning to ensure the intent of the concept plan is met.
- Colquitz River Trail is treated the same to avoid on-leash and off-leash requirements at different sections of the trail. On-leash requirement is 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. according to the Animals Bylaw.
- Senior Manager of Parks presented Panama Flats Updated Concept Plan 2025 endorsed by the committee during the September 17, 2025 meeting. The Bylaw would need to be amended, specifically schedules B and C to address control of dogs.
- Concerns with balancing the preservation of Colquitz River Trail with off-leash regulations.

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by M. Watt: “That the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee recommend to Council that:

- 1. P4-N zoning be retained in Colquitz Park and extended to Panama Hill, with public uses consistent with the Council direction on September 23, 2023; and**
- 2. The wetlands, inside the perimeter berm, be zoned P-5 if that gives this area the highest form of protection as a nature and migratory bird sanctuary.”**

MOVED by H. Hollis and Seconded by M. Watt: “That the motion on the floor be amended to add: “include review of Animals Bylaw that conflict with zoning”.”

RESULT (AMENDMENT): Carried 7 TO 1

IN FAVOUR: Chambers, Hodson, Wilkes, Watt, Bridge, Little, Anderson

OPPOSED: Woodruff

RESULT (MAIN MOTION, AS AMENDED): Carried 7 TO 1

IN FAVOUR: Chambers, Hodson, Wilkes, Watt, Bridge, Little, Anderson

OPPOSED: Woodruff

Main Motion as Amended:

“That the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee recommend to Council that:

- 1. P4-N zoning be retained in Colquitz Park and extended to Panama Hill, with public uses consistent with the Council direction on September 23, 2023; and**
- 2. The wetlands, inside the perimeter berm, be zoned P-5 if that gives this area the highest form of protection as a nature and migratory bird sanctuary; and**
- 3. Include review of Animals Bylaw that conflict with zoning.”**

YEAR IN REVIEW

The Committee had a roundtable discussion regarding PKOLS (Mount Douglas Park), and the following was noted:

- Suggested the Parks department consider erosion of natural environment on the edges of trails.
- Deliberations for the creation and use of formal trails should be considered as high priority.

H. Hollis exited the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

The Committee had a roundtable discussion regarding Gabo Creek, and the following was noted:

- The committee expressed appreciation for new plantings and creek restoration that had occurred.
- Tour to Gabo Creek with staff was enjoyable.
- Spotted barred owls on stumps and platforms integrated into the area.
- Concerned that creek restoration was approached from an engineering perspective, resulting in negative effects on coho salmon.
- A partnership between Peninsula Streams Society and Saanich helps to ensure water continues to flow in the Colquitz River.
- Consideration of strengthening ecological elements of the creek, such as providing for more shade and widening streams.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

- The committee highlighted positive individual experiences over the last year.
- Grateful for the opportunities for public engagement.

The Senior Manager, Parks discussed awards and recognition for the development and update of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy, with committee interest expressed in exploring future funding opportunities.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by M. Watt: “That the meeting be adjourned.”

RESULT: Carried 8 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Anderson, Woodruff, Chambers, Wilkes, Hodson, Humphrey, McIvor, Watt

OPPOSED: None

The meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE CLERK